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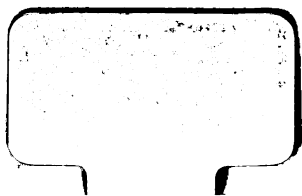
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G. A. Kent

4° 26



Howlett, (-?)

OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

Increased Population, Healthiness, &c.

OF

THE TOWN OF MAIDSTONE.



Gough Adair Kent
H^c 26

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M,DCC,LXXXII.



OBSERVATIONS, &c.

MAIDSTONE is situated upon the banks of the river Medway, nearly in the center of the county of Kent. The country around it is remarkably fine, highly cultivated, and exceedingly rich and fertile; and, from its continual diversity of surface, affords as great a variety of pleasing views and beautiful landscapes as can well be conceived. The soil is dry, firm, and rocky, abounds with excellent water, nor are there any putrid marshes or stagnant pools within or without to corrupt its atmosphere. The air is therefore pure and salubrious; and a lofty ridge of hills serves as a screen against the unwholesome vapours, and pernicious blasts of the north and north east.

The population, and of course the trade and prosperity, of the town, seem to have been greatly advanced, during the present century. The inhabitants were numbered in the year 1695, by the Reverend Mr. Innys, with a minuteness and particularity which descended to the profession, sex, and age of each individual; and there were at that time, in the town and parish, 3676 persons; in March 1781 a very careful, and, there is reason to believe, not inaccurate survey again was taken, when the number was 5739, consequently an increase of 2063 inhabitants in the course of about 86 years; from a strict and fair examination of the

parish register, it appears, at least with a strong degree of probability, that the greater part of this addition of more than half the original number has been made during the last 30 years; the very period when ingenious and speculative men have believed and asserted that the depopulation of Great Britain has been uncommonly rapid, and that we have as it were been sinking fast into absolute annihilation.

Before we proceed to our intended observations, it may not be amiss to illustrate the advantages to be derived from accurate registers of mortality in the words of Dr. Percival. "The establishment of a judicious and accurate register of births and burials, in every town and parish, would be attended with the most important advantages, medical, political, and moral. By such an institution, the increase or decrease of certain diseases; the comparative healthiness of different situations, climates, and seasons; the influence of particular trades and manufactures on longevity; with many other curious circumstances, not more interesting to physicians, than beneficial to mankind, would be ascertained with tolerable precision. In a political view, exact registers of human mortality are of still greater consequence, as the number of people, and progress of population in the kingdom, may in the most easy and unexceptionable manner be deduced from them. They are the foundation likewise of all calculations concerning the values of assurances on lives, reversionary payments, and of every scheme for providing annuities for widows and persons in old age; in a moral light also such *Tables* are of evident utility, as the increase of vice or virtue may be determined, by observing the proportion which the diseases arising from luxury, intemperance, and other similar causes bear to the rest; and in what particular places dif-

temper

temper of this class are found to be most fatal." Percival's essays, vol. 2d:

The parish registers of this kingdom, indeed, have not generally been kept with that degree of minute and accurate discrimination necessary for all the useful and curious deductions here suggested, nor can it be pretended that that of Maidstone in particular has. It appears, however, that the insertion of baptisms, marriages, and burials in it, after the common and ordinary way, has been always so extremely regular as to afford, in conjunction with actual surveys at different periods, much pleasing and satisfactory information. Nay it may be truly added, that during the last 20 or 30 years, it has some peculiar recommendation, which will be apparent from the tables subjoined. Should the matter engage the attention of the medical gentlemen of the town (who are certainly best able to assist and direct in an undertaking of this kind) it will probably for the future have every requisite distinction, and be annually published as regular bills of mortality. The cities of Norwich and Carlisle, the towns of Northampton, Eccles, and some others have set the example. Maidstone need not be ashamed to follow; as it will appear, that, in some respects, she is little inferior to *any*, and greatly superior to *most* of them. In the mean time, and till the register acquires this desirable perfection, we will make the best use we can of it, in its present state.

TABLE

T A B L E I.

BAPTISMS, BURIALS, AND MARRIAGES IN THE TOWN OF
MAIDSTONE IN TEN DECENNIARY PERIODS, BEGIN-
NING WITH THE YEAR 1682, AND ENDING WITH 1781.

Dates.	<i>Baptisms</i>			<i>Marriages</i>		<i>Burials</i>	
	Males	Females	Total	Mar.	Males	Females	Total
1682	678	665	1343	249	762	663	1425
—92	625	638	1263	335	615	598	1213
1702	604	591	1195	253	606	619	1225
—12	573	633	1206	350	638	494	1132
—22	646	635	1281	381	735	623	1358
—32	669	640	1309	423	780	740	1520
—42	718	687	1405	484	787	711	1498
—52	739	723	1462	449	625	684	1309
1762	771	698	1469	460	706	720	1406
1772	903	839	1742	533	814	735	1549
Total	6926	6749	13675	3917	7038	6587	13625

The

The slightest inspection of this table suggests many curious conclusions. The first 30 years, that is, during the reigns of James the 2d, of William the 3d, and of queen Ann, we observe that both the baptisms and burials, and of course the number of people were considerably diminished; notwithstanding that the thread manufecture, which is now dwindled to almost nothing, was then in its most flourishing state.

From this æra quite through the reign of George the 1st, and to the latter end of George the 2d, the baptisms were continually increasing. The burials however advanced in a much greater proportion, and at intervals with singular *inequality*, insomuch that in the 10 years, beginning with 1732 they were the more numerous by above 200, or almost one 6th of the whole. We cannot therefore certainly conclude that the inhabitants were much augmented, but only that the mortality of the town, from whatever cause, was greatly increased. From that time to the present, the baptisms have been almost continually gaining on the burials, till in the 10 years, now immediately past, they have got nearly 200 before them, which probably indicates the double advantage of multiplied numbers and diminished unhealthiness. Upon casting an eye over the *annual* lists of burials we see, that, before the modern improved practice of inoculation was introduced, every 5 or 6 years the average number was almost constantly doubled; and it is found upon enquiry, that at such intervals nearly the small pox used to repeat its dreadful periodical visits. The numbers which died of this distemper were not particularly noticed in the register till the year 1753; when they amounted to 70 persons out of the 209 that died in that year, and 102 out of 223 in 1760, and 54 out of 181 in 1766.

Prior

Prior to these instances it broke out in the year 1734, and twice more in the course of about 11 years immediately subsequent to that; at each of which times it raged with greater violence and made much more terrible havock than in either of the periods above-mentioned; we may therefore very fairly conclude that in the short space of 30 years it deprived the town of between 5 and 600 of its inhabitants; whereas in the 15 or 16 years that have elapsed since the general inoculation it has occasioned the death of only about 60. Ample and satisfactory evidence of the vast benefit the town has received from this salutary invention! And it appears, with a high degree of probability, upon proofs similar to the above, that, from the same causes, in the kingdom-at large not less than 4 or 500,000 lives were lost in the former of the periods now stated, and that nearly half that number has been saved in the latter.

In the year 1695 the inhabitants were only, as before observed, 3676; the annual burials on an average of 10 years immediately preceding were 147; and the annual mortality 1 in 25 of the whole population. In 1781 the people were 5739; the annual burials, upon an average of the same number of years, taken in the same relation, only 152, and the proportionate mortality about 1 in 37 $\frac{2}{3}$; of course a diminution thereof has happened of more than a 4th since the former æra. This may perhaps in some small degree be ascribed to the greater care and cleanliness observed in our prisons; the bettered condition of many of our inhabitants as well as houses; the improvements in physic and surgery, and the generally more skilful treatment of various disorders; but principally and chiefly to that distinguished blessing of providence *inoculation*.

TABLE

T A B L E II.

ANNUAL AVERAGE MORTALITY, OR PROPORTION OF
DEATHS TO THE WHOLE NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN THE
FOLLOWING PLACES RESPECTIVELY

Rome	-	-	-	-	-	1 in 23
Amsterdam	-	-	-	-	-	1 in 24
Breslaw	-	-	-	-	-	1 in 25
Berlin	-	-	-	-	-	1 in 26 $\frac{1}{2}$
Northampton and Shrewsbury	-	-	-	-	-	1 in 26 $\frac{1}{2}$
Manchester	-	-	-	-	-	1 in 28
Liverpool	-	-	-	-	-	1 in 27 $\frac{1}{2}$
Warrington	-	-	-	-	-	1 in 34 $\frac{3}{4}$
Leeds, Yorkshire	-	-	-	-	-	1 in 21 $\frac{3}{4}$
Chester	-	-	-	-	-	1 in 41
Eccles, Lancashire	-	-	-	-	-	1 in 37
Feverham	-	-	-	-	-	1 in 33
*Dartford, nearly	-	-	-	-	-	1 in 32
*Gravefend	-	-	-	-	-	1 in 21
*Milton	-	-	-	-	-	1 in 18
*Maidstone	-	-	-	-	-	1 in 37 $\frac{2}{3}$
*Warminster, Wilts	-	-	-	-	-	1 in 37
*Barnstaple, Devonshire	-	-	-	-	-	1 in 35
*Wednesbury, Staffordshire	-	-	-	-	-	1 in 28

This table exhibits the degrees of mortality in a variety of large towns in different parts of the world, and it presents an advantageous idea of the healthiness of Maidstone compared with most of them. Of the whole number indeed there is only the city of Chester, which surpasses it in this respect; while most of the others are left far behind. Those mark'd thus * are deduced from very late surveys, and rest on the authority of the clergymen of those places respectively.

B

TABLE

T A B L E III.

BAPTISMS AND MARRIAGES IN MAIDSTONE DURING TWO PERIODS OF FIVE YEARS EACH, THE FIRST BEGINNING WITH THE YEAR 1762, THE SECOND WITH 1777.

<i>First Period.</i>			<i>Second Period.</i>		
Dates	Baptif.	Marria.	Dates	Baptif.	Marria.
1762	144	49	1777	193	39
63	132	55	78	182	51
64	143	40	79	190	64
65	144	41	80	180	78
66	152	39	81	197	46
Totals	715	224		942	278
Avera	143	44 $\frac{1}{3}$		188 $\frac{2}{5}$	55 $\frac{3}{5}$

From this table we may conjecture the progress of population during the last 20 years, in the prodigious increase both of marriages and baptisms. The annual average of baptisms for the 5 years beginning with 1762 was only, 143; but for the 5 years now immediately past it has been 188 $\frac{2}{5}$; the marriages in the former period were annually 44 $\frac{1}{3}$; in the latter 55 $\frac{3}{5}$. Making the one or the other the standard of computation, or both united, the town seems to have acquired almost $\frac{2}{3}$ of its present inhabitants since the year 1761; and after every fair deduction it can scarcely be less than 6 or 800 persons. And it may here be observed that the marriage register, while supported by correspondent baptisms,

is

is at once a presumptive evidence of the past and the present, and a faithful promise with regard to the future.

The marriage register considered in another point of view bears very honourable testimony in favour of the inhabitants. One of the best and most accurate of the French writers on the subject of population estimates the average proportion of marriages to the whole number of people in France at about 1 to 120; and in the city of Paris at 1 to almost 160. When it is considered what multitudes their ecclesiastical institutions absurdly condemn to celibacy, we may naturally suppose that the proportion with us is much higher. By the following table we see that in Maidstone, it is as 1 to 103; which is not only higher than the French average, with all the prodigious advantage derived from the country parishes, but superior to most other towns of similar description, though inferior size, even in England.

B 2

TABLE

T A B L E IV.

PROPORTION OF THE NUMBER OF ANNUAL MARRIAGES
TO THE TOTAL POPULATION IN THE FOLLOWING
PLACES RESPECTIVELY.

<i>Countries.</i>	<i>Parishes.</i>	<i>No. of Inhabitants</i>	<i>Proportion of Marriages.</i>
Essex.	Chelmsford	2436	1 in 106
Norfolk.	{ Buckenham	1327	1 in 134
	{ Swaffham	1876	1 in 119
	{ Northwalsingham	1627	1 in 117
Suffolk.	Woodbridge	2600	1 in 136
Lancaster.	Eccles	9125	1 in 123
Devon.	Barnstaple	3176	1 in 121
Wilts.	Warminster	4209	1 in 122
Hants.	Andover	2899	1 in 109
Kent.	{ Feverham	2527	1 in 114
	{ Maidstone	5739	1 in 103

From a view of table I. we see that the number of marriages for the 10 years beginning with 1752 were considerably less than the 10 years immediately preceding. Now this was the very period in which the *marriage act* took place, and this decrease of weddings may at first sight suggest a conclusion greatly to its disadvantage, and induce one to suppose that it has operated as a powerful restraint upon matrimony; but nothing can be more fallacious than such a supposition. The marriage act has doubtless promoted regularity and order, has sometimes restrained folly and prevented misery; but scarcely a shadow of evidence has yet been produced, that it has at all obstructed judicious connections,

nections, encouraged illicit intercourse, or diminished legal population. The diminution of marriages in the instance before us, evidently arose from hence. A surrogate constantly resided in the town. Before the marriage act he had often no doubt influence sufficient to engage the parties to whom he granted a licence, to grant *him* in return the privilege of marrying them. But this was afterwards effectually prevented by their being obliged to have the solemnity performed in the parish to which one of them belonged; hence the surrogate missed the additional advantage of the marriage fee, and the weddings in the town were immediately diminished, but unquestionably they are to be found in the registers of the neighbouring parishes. For taking a vast number and variety of parishes of every size, situation, and description, it appears that the aggregate proportion of marriages and burials has been considerably greater since the marriage act took place than before; which, if it be not absolute demonstration, is at least strong presumptive evidence, that instead of discouraging matrimony, it has greatly promoted it, and been a powerful check to licentiousness.

TABLE

T A B L E V.

NUMBER OF BAPTISMS, MARRIAGES, AND BURIALS IN
225 PARISHES OF 13 COUNTIES, DURING TWO PERIODS
OF 20 YEARS EACH, THE FIRST PERIOD TERMINATING
A LITTLE BEFORE THE MARRIAGE ACT TOOK PLACE,
THE SECOND BEGINNING VERY SOON AFTER.

Counties.	No. Pari.	Before.			After.		
		Baptisms	Marriages	Burials	Baptisms	Marriages	Burials
Bedford	6	1418	354	1312	1613	482	1376
Bucks	11	4494	1007	4157	5430	1399	4562
Cambridge	18	4222	1064	3689	4464	1212	3375
Leicester	7	2273	598	1881	3720	745	2107
Devon	13	11296	5677	14615	14247	6921	16230
Cornwall	16	5532	1528	4892	5686	1683	4643
Hants	} 25	9242	3395	9698	10775	3768	11813
		6239	2443	7081	7962	3379	7843
Norfolk	39	11722	2644	9306	12234	3671	9727
Wils	13	5333	1376	4347	6095	1639	4905
Northumberland	23	23164	7485	23774	21815	8108	21254
Durham	16	12708	3399	10208	13867	3870	11250
Worcester	24	6867	1793	5629	9778	2309	6191
Warwick	14	4968	1347	4161	6029	1699	4477
Totals	225	109478	34110	104750	123715	40285	109758

Proportions of Marriages to
Baptisms & Burials joint-ly about } 1 to $6\frac{1}{4}$
To Baptisms singly about 1 to $3\frac{20}{100}$
To Burials singly about 1 to $3\frac{07}{100}$

1 to $5\frac{1}{5}$
1 to $3\frac{10}{100}$
1 to $2\frac{78}{100}$

We

We here see that the ratio of marriages to baptisms and burials jointly, in the former period, was about as 1 to $6\frac{1}{2}$; in the latter nearly as 1 to $5\frac{4}{5}$; of marriages to baptisms alone, in the former period, as 1 to $3\frac{20}{100}$; in the latter, as 1 to $3\frac{10}{100}$; of marriages to burials alone, in the former period, as 1 to $3\frac{07}{100}$; in the latter, as 1 to $2\frac{72}{100}$. The fairest conclusion from this, is, that the wise and judicious regulations of the above-mentioned act have greatly increased the number and proportion of marriages by rendering it more difficult for any persons to enjoy the *reputation* of matrimony without being really and actually married.

A very striking circumstance offers itself in the register of burials. By the survey of 1781 it appears that the number of males was 417 fewer than the females, and yet on an average of the last 10 years, the male burials were annually about 8 more than the female; and it will be found upon making the requisite computations that only 1 in more than 40 have annually died of the females, and almost 1 in 32 of the males; and the same proportion has probably held throughout the 100 years, as the total of male deaths are to the female nearly as 14 to 13. What can this prodigious difference be owing to? Some allowance is doubtless to be made for the great number of female servants who come principally from the country, at perhaps the most healthy period of human life, and who by the late survey alone amounted to 375 of the 417 by which the females exceed the males. But this circumstance will not account for the 5th part of the disproportion before us.

Both French and English philosophers seem to concur in opinion that women are naturally longer lived than men. But it may perhaps be doubted whether this be founded upon evidence sufficiently various and extensive. From
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mere analogical reasoning just the contrary might be concluded. Men are a greater number of years in coming to their full perfection, both in body and mind; and it is a general law of nature, that by how much longer any animal or vegetable is in growing, by so much the longer it is in decaying. Men are also of a constitution more firm and robust; nor are they liable to an equal number and variety of diseases: On every account therefore they appear fitted for a more extended duration; and agreeable to this obvious inference, it is a wellknown and generally acknowledged fact, that *some* men *have* lived to a greater age than even *any* women have done.

The very ingenious Dr. Heysham of Carlisle has remark'd "that the constitutions of males are fitted for laborious exertions, and that their muscular and nervous fibres may therefore be supposed to become stiff, rigid, and incapable of performing the functions necessary to health and life sooner than those of females, both on account of their original texture and the friction which must necessarily occur from laborious exercise." But this reasoning, however plausible, cannot perhaps be admitted; because in country parishes, where the laborious exertions of the men are beyond comparison the greatest, the difference respecting the mortality we are speaking of is vastly the least; and some times likewise much in favour of the male inhabitants; as is eminently the case in the parish of Brightling, in Suffex; and many other instances similar to it might easily be produced:

Men, it is true, are sometimes exposed to greater dangers and more numerous hardships than women; yet excepting soldiers, sailors, fishermen, colliers, and miners, and probably a few manufacturers, this circumstance has a very confined and trivial operation.

There

There is one cause still behind universally allowed to operate, and which alone, perhaps is fully adequate to the effect. Men are in general especially in large and populous towns, more intemperate than women, both in eating and drinking, and are likewise more commonly chargeable with every other irregularity and licentiousness of conduct. To these therefore may their greater mortality be most frequently imputed; and thus this singular circumstance of register evidence becomes a serious topic of moral admonition.

T A B L E VI.

NUMBER OF BURIALS IN EACH MONTH AND SEASON, DURING TWO PERIODS OF 20 YEARS EACH, THE FIRST PERIOD BEGINNING WITH 1682, THE SECOND WITH 1761.

Months.	First Period.			Seasons	Second Period.			Seasons
	Males	Fema.	Total.		Males	Fema.	Total.	
January	126	124	250	708	149	129	278	771
February	108	98	206		126	119	245	
March	116	136	252		128	120	248	
April	105	102	207	626	115	134	249	721
May	129	98	227		134	113	247	
June	108	84	192		115	110	225	
July	90	86	176	604	113	106	219	680
August	101	90	191		108	91	199	
September	114	123	237		129	133	262	
October	125	130	255	703	129	129	258	770
November	105	94	199		126	135	261	
December	107	142	249		139	112	251	

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This

This table shews the number of deaths, in each month and season for two periods of 20 years each, the first beginning with year 1682, the second with 1761; and it is wonderful to observe the perfect correspondence, not only between the mortality of the respective *seasons* in the two periods, but almost of the respective *months*. That season which is most fatal to human life in one period is exactly so in the other. In this melancholy pre-eminence winter takes the lead, autumn follows next, then comes spring and summer last of all. The skilful physician perhaps might deduce from hence many curious, useful, and important conclusions; but the most superficial inspector cannot but remark that the great disadvantage of our situation seems a deficiency of heat. For besides the distinctions just now made respecting the seasons, it is apparent that of any two months immediately contiguous to each other, the months of December and January in each period have the most numerous deaths; July and August the fewest; the former couple, in the usual course of things, have the greatest degree of *cold*, the latter; of *heat*.

With regard to the great increase of population above demonstrated, we need not indulge the gloomy idea that it has arisen from the depopulation of the country around. On the contrary, very few parishes excepted, it has multiplied its people in full proportion. The increase of the one has perhaps been at once the cause and the consequence of the increase of the other. Allowing for extraordinary cases, where ever you have a large and flourishing town, you will soon have a well cultivated and populous country, and where you have a well cultivated and populous country, you will soon have a large and flourishing town; and it is amazing how the opposite apprehension could ever have become so

so generally prevalent as it has. Their mutual riches encourage their mutual industry ; their mutual industry supply their mutual wants ; the wealth of the town flows into the country, and the products of the country return into the town ; their communication is eagerly rendered more and more easy by every possible means ; new roads are made, or old ones improved ; fens and marshes are drained, waste grounds and commons are inclosed, manured, and cultivated ; bridges are built, rivers are navigated, canals are cut, more hands are employed, and every quarter becomes at once more populous, more healthy, and animated. This in some measure, and with the exception of a few particulars, has been the case with Maidstone and its vicinity for the last 20 or 30 years ; but it has been so in the fullest and amplest degree with respect to more than half the kingdom ; and it may be safely affirmed upon satisfactory evidence, that, notwithstanding the temporary and local checks we have received from the burdens of the present war, England has multiplied her numbers almost twice as much in the short period now mentioned, as France has done since the beginning of this century ; and if we have but spirit and resolution to carry us through the difficulties into which we are plunged, so as to secure us a safe and honorable peace, it is not to be doubted but that our population, and its natural concomitants trade, wealth, and prosperity, will again advance with as great or greater rapidity than ever.

T A B L E VII.

AN ACCURATE SURVEY OF THE INHABITANTS, IN THE TOWN
AND PARISH OF MAIDSTONE, TAKEN IN THE MONTH OF
SEPTEMBER 1782.

Names of the Streets, &c.	Boys under 15	Girls under 15	Men above 20	Women above 20	Men Servants	Women Servants	Total of Males	Total of Females	Inhabit- ants	Houses	No. of Families	No. of
High-Str. Mid. Row includ.	189	137	9	6	31	81	414	495	909	173	195	
Queen-Street - - -	21	34	4	12	4	13	78	99	177	35	35	
Cudding-Lane - - -	32	32	2	1	7	3	69	79	148	31	33	
Gabriel's-Hill - - -	43	42	1	3	21	20	123	124	247	46	47	
Stone-Street - - -	136	149	22	25	28	57	392	499	891	192	204	
Knight-Riders-Street -	23	51	5	12	3	10	74	158	232	15	18	
East-Lane - - -	97	95	10	31	12	26	354	322	676	117	123	
Square and Maryland Point	6	11	1	2	0	2	24	26	50	14	15	
Week-Street - - -	114	107	13	22	25	70	304	371	675	136	139	
In the Meadow - - -	12	19	0	11	0	1	39	46	85	20	21	
Earl-Street - - -	23	32	8	15	6	27	100	123	223	42	44	
Havock-Lane - - -	13	11	2	4	1	1	31	35	66	15	15	
Saint Faith's Green - -	6	9	7	9	4	9	33	54	87	25	25	
Waterfide - - -	18	27	3	4	0	0	53	58	111	24	23	
Bridge-Street and Bridge	26	15	1	2	0	1	57	51	108	26	27	
West Borough - - -	67	78	8	12	3	4	161	185	346	73	73	
In the Town - - -	776	847	96	161	145	325	2306	2722	5028	982	1037	

COUNTRY.

COUNTRY PART OF THE PARISH.

Names of Places.	Boys under 15	Girls under 15	Men above 70	Women above 70	Servants Men.	Servants Women	Total of Males	Total of Females	Inhabit- ants	No. of Houses	No. of Families
Bower											
Barming-Heath	20	14	3	1	8	8	61	49	110	23	24
Buckland and Half Oak											
Loddington	15	14	1	0	8	3	34	29	63	11	11
Tovil	28	39	3	2	7	6	81	86	167	35	34
Penningdon-Heath	21	30	0	3	8	7	46	56	102	14	18
Magniforth	9	9	2	1	9	9	20	17	37	7	8
Willington-Street											
Stoney Rock											
Sheppy Court											
Cold Arbour	51	59	1	2	10	16	115	133	248	43	44
Gould's Court											
Blue Door											
Moat and Park											
Sheppy-Street											
In the Country	144	165	10	9	41	40	357	370	727	133	139
Total	920	1012	106	170	186	365	2682	3092	5755	1115	1176

Persons to a house $5\frac{6}{11}$. To a family, $4\frac{29}{100}$.

It must here be observed, that in the survey of 1781, were comprehended the women and children belonging to 4 or 500 soldiers then quartered in the town, together with all other transient and temporary lodgers. Of the former of these denominations we have now not any, and the latter are entirely unnoticed. It may also be remarked, that the time of the year at which this latter enumeration has been performed, is rather unfavourable for our numbers appearing to advantage; as some of our people are doubtless absent in different parts of the circumjacent country, upon harvest-work and other labours of the season; a few we have unquestionably furnished to the public service of the kingdom, both in the army and navy; and the peculiar

peculiar unhealthiness of the last winter and spring, as well as the general hardship and pressure of the times, must each have somewhat checked our growth. Yet, notwithstanding all these disadvantages, our inhabitants now amount to 5755, which is 16 more than they were in March 1781; and, after due attention to the several considerations now suggested, our actual permanent population can scarcely have been less augmented during the last 18 months, than 100 persons.

To the evidence already adduced, in proof of the extraordinary healthiness of the town, may be added, from the present survey, the high proportion of children under 15, and of men and women above 70 years of age, as no unequivocal testimony of the same pleasing fact. In the city of Chester, the salubrity of which has with justice been considered as very highly distinguished, the number of persons in the year 1774 above 70, was about 1 in $23\frac{1}{2}$ of the total population; in Carlisle in the year 1779, in 29; whereas in Maidstone it is so high as nearly 1 in 20. Again, the ratio of children under 15 in the city of Chester at the above-mentioned period, to the total number of inhabitants, was about 1 to $3\frac{1}{2}$; in Maidstone it is more than 1 to $3\frac{1}{2}$; a superiority, it may fairly be presumed, which the diminution of the number between 15 and 70, from the peculiar circumstances of the times, can by no means deprive us of.

The number of reputed dissenters from the church of England, of every denomination in the town and parish, if not exactly are very nearly as follows; those usually styled Presbyterians 209—Baptists 44—Independents 42—Methodists 138—Quakers 2—In all 435.

N. B. Out of the 1115 Houses contained in the town and parish, there are only 12 empty, and several of those merely for the purpose of being repaired.



